

Message Text

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44

ACTION OES-04

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-06 ISO-00 SP-02 ACDA-05 ERDA-05

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FEAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 PA-01 PRS-01 SS-15 USIA-06

/094 W

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R 140745Z MAR 75

FM AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5280

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMCONSUL BRISBANE BY POUCH

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMCONSUL MELBOURNE

AMCONSUL PERTH BY POUCH

AMCONSUL SYDNEY

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

C O N F I D E N T I A L CANBERRA 1618

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: EALR, TECH, AS

SUBJ: URANIUM ENRICHMENT: VISIT OF GARRETT OFFICIALS

REF: (A) STATE 044490 (NOTAL);

(B) CANBERRA 770 (NOTAL) AND PREVIOUS

1. SUMMARY: GARRETT OFFICIALS DISCUSS U.S. CENTRIFUGE TECHNOLOGY WITH CONNOR AND OTHERS. CONNOR SUSPICIOUS THAT USG WOULD TRY TO "SUBJUGATE" GOA URANIUM POLICY TO AMERICAN OBJECTIVES IF AUSTRALIANS OPT FOR U.S. TECHNOLOGY. CONNOR HINTS HIS TIME AS MINISTER LIMITED AND SAYS ANY U.S. VISIT SHOULD BE MADE BY HEWITT. GOA WILL TALK AGAIN TO URENCO AND JAPANESE SHORTLY. GARRETT VICE PRESIDENT HOPES TO SEE CONNOR IN MID-APRIL. END SUMMARY.

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2. TWO GARRETT CORPORATION OFFICIALS CALLED ON EMBASSY FEBRUARY 26 AND MINERALS AND ENERGY MINISTER R.F.X. CONNOR MARCH 10 TO DISCUSS POSSIBLE GOA INTEREST IN U.S. GAS CENTRIFUGE URANIUM ENRICHMENT TECHNOLOGY. VISITORS, WHO HAD PREVIOUSLY MET WITH CHAIRMAN BOSWELL AND OTHER AUST. ATOMIC ENERGY COMMISSION OFFICIALS IN SYDNEY, WERE T.C. COULL OF GARRETT'S AIRESEARCH MANUFACTURING DIVISION IN TORRANCE, CALIFORNIA, AND JOHN R. GILLAN OF GARRETT'S AUSTRALIAN SUBSIDIARY IN MELBOURNE. PURPOSE OF THEIR CALLS WAS TO EXPLAIN GENERALLY GARRETT'S INVOLVEMENT IN U.S. CENTRIFUGE RESEARCH AND SPECIFICALLY TO DISCUSS POSSIBLE GOA PARTICIPATION IN DEMONSTRATION CENTRIFUGE ENRICHMENT FACILITY (DCEF), WHICH INVOLVES GARRETT AND PARTNERS IN U.S.

3. MARCH 10 MEETING WITH CONNOR ALSO ATTENDED BY SIR LENOX HEWITT, SECRETARY, DEPARTMENT OF MINERALS AND ENERGY (DME) AND DON HUNTER, FIRST ASSISTANT SECRETARY, DME. CONNOR AND HEWITT APPARENTLY WERE IMPRESSED TO LEARN HOW FAR ADVANCED U.S. CENTRIFUGE RESEARCH IS AND AGREED TO MEET AGAIN WITH GARRETT OFFICIALS IN SEVERAL WEEKS. CONNOR, HOWEVER, EXPRESSED DEEP SUSPICION THAT USG MIGHT TRY TO "SUBJUGATE" GOA TO U.S. POLICY OBJECTIVES (E.G. FORCE GOA TO EXPORT URANIUM TO U.S. ADVANTAGE) SHOULD AUSTRALIANS BECOME INVOLVED IN U.S. CENTRIFUGE TECHNOLOGY, AND ASKED FOR FURTHER DETAILS ON THIS POINT. AUSTRALIANS CONFIRMED THAT URENCO TEAM (REF A) WILL VISIT THEM NEXT WEEK (BETWEEN MARCH 17 AND 21) AND THAT GOA-GOJ TALKS ON JOINT ENRICHMENT STUDY WILL RESUME AROUND APRIL 1. IN RESPONSE TO QUERY ABOUT POSSIBLE CONNOR VISIT TO GARRETT FACILITIES IN U.S., MINISTER REPORTEDLY INDICATED THAT HEWITT WOULD BE BETTER PERSON TO VISIT SINCE HE (CONNOR) "MIGHT NOT BE IN THIS SEAT MUCH LONGER."

4. EMBASSY COMMENT: GARRETT VISIT APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN QUITE HELPFUL IN EDUCATING CONNOR AND HEWITT, WHOSE PUBLIC COMMENTS INDICATE NEAR TOTAL IGNORANCE ON TOPIC, ABOUT U.S. CENTRIFUGE EXPERIENCE. COULL AND GILLAN EVIDENTLY FULLY AWARE OF USG STRICTURES ON ANY DISCUSSION BY GARRETT OF POSSIBLE TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER WITH AUSTRALIANS BUT FEEL THAT BY EXPLORING GOA INTEREST IN TAKING SMALL EQUITY POSITION IN DCEF THEY CAN INTEREST THEM IN BROADER FUTURE INVOLVEMENT (I.E. USE OF U.S. CENTRIFUGE

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TECHNOLOGY IN PROPOSED AUSTRALIAN ENRICHMENT PLANT). INCIDENTALLY, EMBASSY FEELS CONNOR HAS NO INTEREST WHATEVER IN DCEF EQUITY, DESPITE OPERATING EXPERIENCE AND OTHER BENEFITS THEY MIGHT ACQUIRE FROM IT. GARRETT HOPES TO SEND VICE PRESIDENT TO TALK AGAIN TO CONNOR AND HEWITT AROUND MID-APRIL.

5. CONNOR'S DEEP-SEATED SUSPICION THAT USG MIGHT TRY TO USE GOA INTEREST IN CENTRIFUGE TECHNOLOGY TO INFLUENCE GOA URANIUM

POLICY TO OUR ADVANTAGE IS REGRETTABLE BUT HARDLY SURPRISING.
CONNOR'S CURIOUS REFERENCE TO HIS OWN POSSIBLE DEPARTURE FROM
PRESENT POSITION PROBABLY REFERS ONLY TO FACT HE MAY BE TOO
OLD TO STAND FOR RE-ELECTION AGAIN WHENEVER NEXT ELECTIONS ARE
HELD. HOWEVER, EMBASSY WILL ATTEMPT TO LEARN IF THERE IS MORE
BEHIND THIS INTERESTING COMMENT.
HARROP

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